

Special mention must be made as of late, largely owing to his daughter being a Greyhound, Dave Koss has been sporting a set of green Loyola head covers, a circumstance we sought to remedy by presenting him a more appropriate alternative at the awards dinner. We're glad to learn he took the hint to heart...



Koss Headcover

...if only for a moment.

As regards individual honors, **Larry Becker (11th Co.)** and **Phil Schlaepfer (4th Co.)** took longest drive and closest-to-the-pin honors for the men, while Deb Geanuleas and Jean Holman, wives of **Lee (11th Co.)** and **Bobby (22nd Co.)** respectively, were the winning women.

Meanwhile, in the ultimate all-too human drama that is athletic competition, there's the agony of almost...



Almost

...juxtaposed against the thrill of victory, in this case, tournament winners **Marc Troiani (4th Co.)**, **Phil Schlaepfer (4th Co.)**, **Denny Haines (4th Co.)** and **Joe Christofferson (4th Co.)**, shown below left to right...



Winners

...who eked out a 1-stroke victory over runner-ups **Jim Bethmann (33rd Co.)**, **Roger Sheppard (33rd Co.)**, **Jim "Breeze" Gould (18th Co.)** and **Mark Kozicz (18th Co.)**...unconfirmed reports of raked putts notwithstanding.

Our heartiest thanks go out to **Paul Croisetiere (35th Co.)** for acting as Class Photographer for both the Queenstown round and the awards dinner which followed at the Severn Inn, Craig Turley for acting as tournament vice-chair and **Charles Ivey (20th Co.)** and Stan Cooper (USNA '81) for providing the most excellent bourbon and cigars with the special '77 class crest band.

In other golf news of note, the week following the reunion, the team of **Chris "FOD-buster" Feeney (11th Co.)**, **Jim "Unconquered" Kelly (11th Co.)**, **Lee "Prompt Critical" Geanuleas (11th Co.)** and Eric "The Red" Utegaard (USNA '69), shown below left to right after birdying #18...



Homecoming Scramble

...tied for first place in the USNA Homecoming Scramble. Relying on Feeney's Crenshaw-like putting stroke, Utegaard's dart-like irons, Geanuleas' prodigious drives, and Kelly's uncanny knack for reading greens and sparkling personality, the three near-septuagenarians from '77 and the former All-American golfer from '69 carded a 15-under par, matching the score of a team from the Class of '09.

Though the young pups who graduated just 13 years ago eventually won on a scorecard tiebreaker, the time-tested veterans showed beyond a doubt that they, and the Class of 1977, aren't done yet!

Two thoughts immediately come to mind: First, BZ gentlemen; Second, Lee, you'll have to explain those nicknames next time we speak.

Finally, the personal publicist of **Dave Vail (31st Co.)** ...his wife Mary...informed us the

former Navy swimmer had the honor of meeting gold medalist Rowdy Gaines, who frequently announces the Army-Navy swim meets as well as the Olympics. Gaines was in Las Vegas to present a grant to Float Like A Duck, an organization which promotes water safety by providing free swim lessons for at-risk youths, and for which Dave and his family all volunteer.

That's Dave below on the far right standing next to Rowdy:



Dave Vail

How **Mike Laviano (20th Co.)** managed to photo-bomb the event remains a mystery. Magoo

'78

Life Membership: 81%

Donor Participation: 44.00%

Pres: **Glen Woods**

Sec'y: **Vince Balderrama**
1320 Homewood Ln., Annapolis, MD 21401
e: canoeu78@aol.com

Website: usna1978.org

In October, **Welling Clark (5th Co)** informed us that our classmate, now retired Admiral/ Ambassador, **Harry Harris (15th Co)** has settled in Colorado. Welling wrote that Harry and his spouse, **Bruni Bradley ('84)** briefed the Colorado Springs Military Affairs Committee last May. Welling said Harry got the info "across in an understandable format." (He stopped short of saying "simple enough for a Marine to understand. Thanks,") Harry also hosted a VP get together in the summer for all his VP bubbas "(and invited this lowly SWO type [Welling] being courteous)." Welling wrote that Colorado Springs is getting a fair number of 78ers out there in Colorado Springs. **Danny "Tex" Kuehlen (5th Co)** and **Jim Degree (33rd Co)**, plus **John O'Dwyer (5th Co)**. He added that 5th Compnymate, **George Ball**, is in the Denver metro area.

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Lew Wolfrom (30th Co) also wrote about his company's most recent gathering. "Since our 40th reunion in 2018, 30th Company '78 has held mini-reunions annually in Annapolis." This last year - at the invitation of Brenda and **Brad Thomann** - the "Lizard Patrol" held their annual gathering in Colorado to align with the Navy - Air Force football game. In addition to attending the game in Falcon Stadium, Lew wrote that the Thomanns played tour guides to Pike's Peak summit and the Garden of the Gods Resort. They also showed the gang Evergreen, Colorado, and the Georgetown Loop rail tour. Attendees this year included: Kathryn and **Lew Wolfrom**, **Tom Atkinson**, Barb and **Tony Cato**, Ingrid and **Dick Boehme**, and Ellen and **Al Fylak**. Hurricane Ian kept Barb and **Rick Paulsen** from attending. Lew said, "The week was marked by perfect weather, fine dining, a tough hard-fought loss to the Zoomies, and a competition between **Dick Boehme** and **Tony Cato** for the best Naval Academy sea story. We are looking forward to returning to Annapolis in 2023 for the 45th reunion full class muster." We look forward to seeing you guys and a lot of classmates and spouses in Sept 2023! **Bruce Gearey** (30th Co) later showed that Lew gets around. Bruce sent a quick note that Kathryn and Lew joined Bruce and his wife, Robin, and Chesapeake, VA resident company mate, **Bob Ryan**, for a great dinner in Tidewater.



Jonas Bob Ryan with Wolfroms and Geareys

Over Alumni Weekend, I attended a reception of Friends of Naval Academy Music (FONAM) at our long retired, USNA Musical Director Emeritus, Dr. John Barry Talley's house. It was a great reunion of current and alumni Choir and Glee Club members and other musical alumni and friends who support the music program with their time and treasure. Also there from '78 were **Ed Henkler** (20th Co) and his daughter, Mandy, Lisa and **Kiel Norris** (25th Co), **Jim "Vandy" Vanderkamp** (11th Co), Mindy and **Chris Jensen** (13th Co), and **John Semcken** (2nd Co). Besides the comradery there more than a few musical renditions by alumni. Our own Chris Jensen did his best Professor Harold Higgins (the Music Man) impression in leading a raffle of some great prizes. All the funds went to support the music program at the Academy. Mindy and Chris are just up the road in Arnold, MD. **Jim** came all the way from Hawaii! Vandy is retired from the airlines and is now an accident investigator for either the FAA or NTSB (Sorry, I had a senior moment.) Anyway, he is traveling around the world and keeping his fingers in aviation. Kiel and his bride, Lisa, are traveling around and enjoying Kiel's retirement. Ed came up from South Carolina. Many of you may be aware of Ed's deep

involvement with helping veterans and people with disabilities find employment and thrive with vision loss as founder of The Blind Guide. He is also passionate about the prevention of blindness and enabling technology for the blind or visually impaired; and implementing solutions to improve their quality of life and increase their employability. Check out his site. John is still out in LA (For you Loosiana guys like **Duane LaFont** (15th Co) that means *Los Angeles*). For over fifteen years, John, and his Majestic Realty partners' (Ed Roski and Kent Valley) *Land of the Free Foundation* have been providing financial support to programs that help our armed service personnel and their families. Check out the Foundation website and you'll see it has contributed to over 75 organizations that help our military, veterans and their families, and service academies. These beneficiaries have also helped tens of thousands cope with PTSD, injury recovery, survivor trauma and guilt, education, and scholarship, provided therapy, ADA and customized home and equipment, etc. The Foundation's big event is their annual Veteran's Day Classic Golf Tournament. This year it was another resounding success with \$1.3 million raised and every penny being donated to organizations that support the military. I never cease to be amazed at the work and service to our nation and communities that many of you do. Proud to be in the Class of '78!!



Chris and Mindy Jensen, Vandy and John



'78: 30th Co at Navy vs Air Force



Ed, Mindy, Kiel and Lisa

In closing, our 45th Reunion is this fall (Air Force game weekend, Thursday- Sunday, Oct 19-22, 2023). Over the next several

months, you'll be getting more info on it from the reunion committee through direct e-mails (from our Class Prez, Glen, your company reps, webmaster, or me), on our social media platforms (class website, Facebook page and a unique reunion website), or from word of mouth. In the meantime- please update your contact info in the directories on our class website, the Alumni Association website, and to your company rep. Let's also go full speed ahead and try to find our "lost classmates" and welcome them back to the fold.

I hope the new year brings you and your families good health and happiness- and more opportunities to gather with one another; *For Whenever Two or Three Shall Meet....*

Until the next edition,
I'm Launchin' Spot Four.

'79

Life Membership: 91%
Donor Participation: 18.57%

Pres: **CAPT Dave Jackson, USN (Ret.)**
e: djackson@usna.edu

Sec'y: **LCDR John "Wiz" Withers, USN (Ret.)**
1886 Woodpoint Ct., Lawrenceville, GA 30043
p: 240-298-1006; e: JDWithers@1979.usna.com

Social Network Links:
<http://www.linkedin.com/in/wizwithers>

Facebook Group: **USNA Class of 1979**

Website: www.usna79.com

Greetings 79ers!

Remember back in the 20th Century when we used to pay bills by writing and mailing personal checks (and hope they got there on time)? Invariably every January, on the first few checks, I would write out the date and then realize that I had used the wrong year. I didn't always catch it - once I had a mis-dated check returned saying they didn't accept checks more than 90 days old!

We rarely write checks anymore, so now it seems to take me longer to get in the habit of writing the new year. Yet here we are - twenty twenty-three. 2023. No matter which way I write it out, it still seems a little strange. By the time I get used to it, it will be time to change the year again...

Last month I reported the tragic loss of **Terry Druffel** in a small aircraft mishap. **Denny Fox**, a fellow NC resident and friend of the family, attended the memorial service. Denny said that Terry's wife Linda appreciated the large turnout. Terry was a well-respected member of the community and served as a volunteer with the Brunswick County (NC) Sheriff's Office Marine Patrol as well as an instructor pilot. Several of Terry's old squadron mates made the drive up from Florida and shared a number of sea stories.

Denny was able to connect with Terry's brother Tim (from Chicago), and with his Plebe year roommate **Kerry Groomes**. Kerry had driven over from Pittsburgh, and they figure they hadn't seen each other since around 1980.

The reunions and connections were enjoyable, even if the reason for them was a sorrowful one. Terry would have been happy to see it. RIP, Flex...

Right after I sent off last month's column to Alumni House, we received word that **Dan Enloe** had passed away suddenly, triggered by a recently diagnosed hereditary heart condition. Dan and Angela had recently sold their home in Portland, OR and relocated to Chesapeake, VA. They cruised their 80' Hatteras yacht from Portland, through the Panama Canal, and up to Virginia, where they planned to enjoy some Caribbean cruising.

Choosing submarines on graduation, Dan entered the Reserve after his initial obligation. He spent 30+ years working at Intel Corporation, where among other things he received two patents for his work. After leaving Intel he started his own consulting company (Ennovation, LLC) and also was appointed President and COO of Wildfire Alliance, Inc., which worked on saving homes from wildfires.

As of this writing, the family plans to lay Dan to rest at Arlington National Cemetery in January 2023. Class President **Dave Jackson** will be promulgating these details to the official class email list. Many thanks to **Chris Brehany** and **Pete Kurzenhauser** for supporting the family.

Bill McKinney took some time out from his "busy" retirement to update us on his status. Bill entered full retirement in 2021, and after some planning, he and his wife Georgene sold

everything: house, cars, furniture, the whole lot. They now spend all their time traveling the world - most recently Spain, Albania and Portugal, with Ecuador next on the list.

They've also visited a couple of their 15th Co. classmates, including **Jim Pendley** in Jacksonville, FL; **Jim Fothergill** in California, and **Eugene "Geno" Miller** in Philadelphia, PA. Bill relates his travel adventures on his blog: ExpatNomadTravel.com. Thanks, Bill! Now with the world starting to open up for travel again, we'll look forward to hearing more!



Chance meeting: Cliff Wilson and Mike Lambie

Even though the world is indeed opening up, we still see signs that it's a very small world indeed. One afternoon **Mike Lambie** stopped his local bicycle shop in the Detroit, MI area. On getting out of the car, he sees a truck with USNA 79 license plates. Wondering who the owner was, he wanders into the shop only to see his old weight room buddy **Cliff Wilson**. To say they were both surprised was an



'79: Bill McKinney with (clockwise) Jim Fothergill, Geno Miller and Jim Pendley